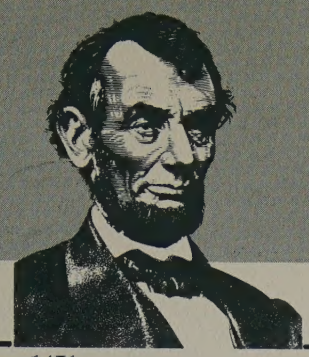

Lincoln Lore

Bulletin of The Lincoln National Life Foundation . . . Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, Editor
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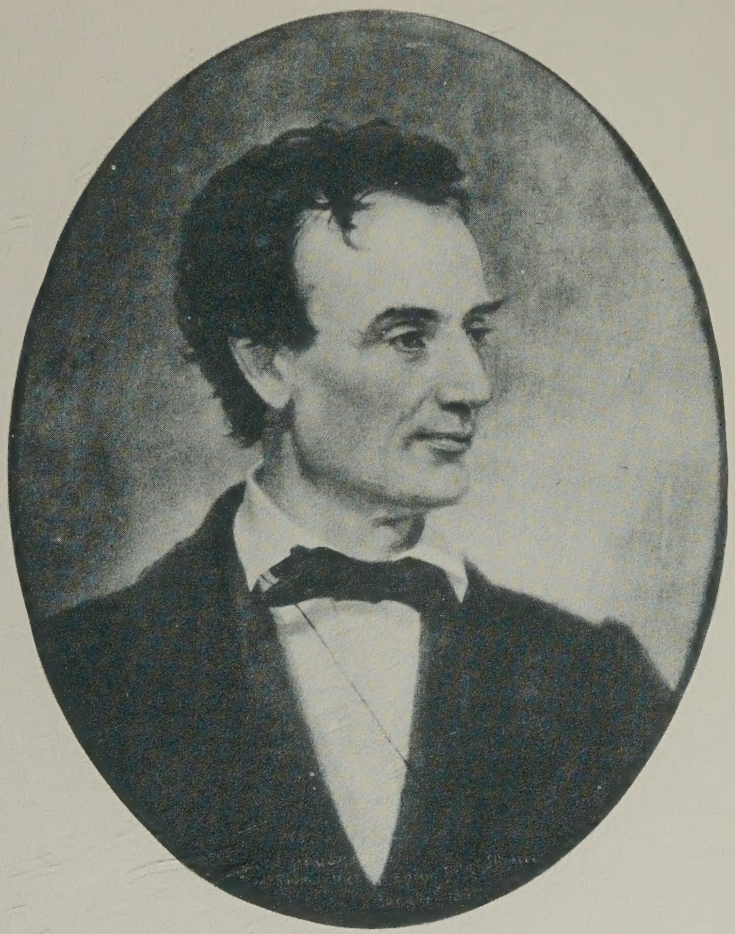
THOMAS HICKS' PORTRAIT "THE YOUTHFUL LINCOLN"

It was Thomas Hicks of New York, N. Y. (formerly Newton, Bucks County, Pennsylvania) who painted Lincoln's first beardless portrait. From Orville H. Browning's *Diary*, June 12 & 13, 1860. Volume 1, page 415, we learn that Hicks worked on Lincoln's portrait on June 12, 1860 and that the artist finished it on the afternoon of the following day. Hicks dated the portrait "June 14, 1860." However, there is every reason to believe that the portrait required a number of sittings and several days work to complete. Hicks was the first of some fifteen or twenty artists who went to Springfield, Illinois, during the summer and fall of 1860 to paint the Republican presidential candidate's portrait.

The beardless portraits of Hicks, Barry, Johnston, Brown, Conant and Wright served the Republican party well as the general public was not familiar with Lincoln's face at the beginning of the presidential campaign. However, these beardless portraits were soon rendered obsolete when Lincoln started to grow a beard. It was Jesse Atwood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who in late October, 1860, went to Springfield and first put on canvass a bearded portrait of Lincoln.

Hicks went to Springfield in early June, 1860, armed with a letter of introduction from the New York newspaper editor Charles A. Dana. The letter was addressed to William H. Herndon, Lincoln's third and last law partner. Hicks had been commissioned by a leading New York publishing house (W. H. Schaus and Company) to paint a portrait of Lincoln, a lithograph of which was to be used in the approaching campaign.



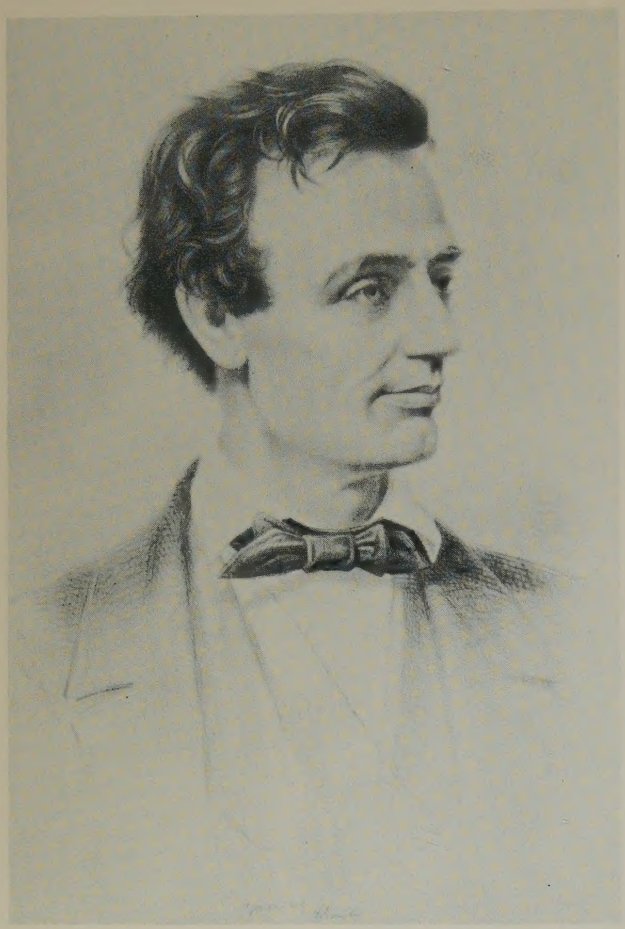
A rotogravure cut of the original Thomas Hicks portrait of Abraham Lincoln.

Herndon introduced Hicks to Lincoln and he consented to sit for a portrait. The sittings were from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. each week day in Lincoln's temporary office. The artist's account of the sittings was published in 1886 in the *Reminiscenses of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of his Time* compiled by Allen Thorndike Rice, pages 592-607. A biographical sketch of Hicks also appears in the same publication under "Biographical Sketches," pages 646-647.

Hicks was apparently a Republican but there is every indication that he had been pro-Seward before the nominating convention which met in Chicago. It was in April, 1860 that Hicks went to Washington, D. C. and was given a letter to William H. Seward, by the Republican committee, requesting the senator to sit for the artist for a portrait. The sittings were very pleasant and the portrait was copied on a silk banner. This same banner "was taken to Chicago to be unfurled when Mr. Seward should have been nominated by acclamation." The banner is now owned (1886) by the Union League Club. After meeting Lincoln and being captivated by his magnetic personality Hicks is quoted as having said, "Mr. Lincoln you are to be the next president of the United States."

Hicks had good professional training. He first studied in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and afterwards the National Academy of Design of New York. He was elected Academician in 1851. In Europe in 1845 he studied in the National Gallery in London and all of the great galleries of Paris. In Rome Hicks was a pupil of Ferero, the distinguished teacher and draughtsman. After several years abroad Hicks returned to New York and began a successful career as an artist.

When the bust-length portrait of Lincoln was finished and was pronounced a perfect likeness, Lincoln said: "It will give the people of the East a correct idea of how I look at home, and, in fact, how I look in my office. I think the picture has a somewhat pleasanter expression than I usually have, but, that, perhaps is not an objection." Hicks reported that "Mrs. Lincoln was to have come to the office to see the portrait, but on the day appointed it was raining, so I had it taken to the house.



A lithograph made from the Thomas Hicks portrait in 1860.

It was carried to the drawing-room, where I put it in a proper light to be seen, and placed a chair for Mrs. Lincoln. Sitting down before it, she said, 'Yes, that is Mr. Lincoln. It is exactly like him, and his friends in New York will see him as he looks here at home. How I wish I could keep it, or have a copy of it.'" The finished portrait is of course clean-shaven, with head turned to half right, in black coat and dark gray waistcoat, with white shirt and black bow tie.

Browning was also impressed with the excellence of the portrait. He recorded this statement in his *Diary*: "It is deeply imbued with the intellectual and spiritual, and I doubt whether any one ever succeeds in getting a better picture of the man." Browning also wrote the following testimonial for Hicks, the original of which is in the Lincoln National Life Foundation:

"Springfield Illinois
"June 13, 1860

"I have carefully examined the portrait of Hon. A. Lincoln, painted by Thomas Hicks, Esq., and do not hesitate to pronounce it a great success.

"I have known Mr. Lincoln intimately for many years, and was present and in conversation with him much of the time whilst it was being painted, and cannot adequately express my admiration of the fidelity of the picture, and the perfect and satisfactory idea which it gives of the original, and of his physical, mental, and moral characteristics.

"I doubt whether art is capable of transferring to canvass a more exact and life like representation of the 'human face divine.'

O. H. Browning."

Years later the Browning testimonial was sent to Robert T. Lincoln by Eugene G. Foster. Lincoln's son wrote Foster the following letter which is in the files of The Lincoln National Life Foundation:

"1775 N Street
"Washington, D. C.
"April 8, 1918

"Dear Mr. Foster:

"It is only in a vague way that I know of the picture of my father by Thomas Hicks. The letter of Mr. Browning which you quote is certainly a most interesting document, and if it accompanied the picture, it would add greatly to the importance of the painting. Mr. Browning was one of the most distinguished men in Illinois, and all he says about his intimacy of acquaintance with my father is well known to me to be correct. He was a man of high education and culture and better able than most men to give a valuable judgment of the work. As I have already indicated to you, I have not the slighest notion of the whereabouts of the Hicks portrait.

"Very truly yours,
"Robert T. Lincoln

"Mr. Eugene G. Foster"

J. H. Bufford, a well known lithographer of the period published a lithograph of the painting for W. H. Schaus and Company of New York in 1860. The lithographic stone was the work of L. Grozelier of Boston, Massachusetts. Both the portrait and the lithograph depict Lincoln to be very young, at least ten years younger than any other portrait. The work might be designated as "The Youthful Lincoln."

The original portrait was sold in 1861 by Hicks to Edson Bradley, Sr., of Washington, D. C. The portrait next became the property of Mrs. Herbert Shipman, widow of a prominent Episcopal bishop and granddaughter of Bradley. The portrait was exhibited only once since its purchase by Bradley, at the Life and Times of Abraham Lincoln Exhibition in New York City in 1936. The exhibition was held at the Hotel Lincoln for the benefit of the Madison Square Boy's Club. While in Mrs. Shipman's possession the portrait hung in her apartment in River House, 435 E. 42nd Street in New York City.

The New York *Herald-Tribune* for November 16, 1940 carried a news article to the effect that the Hicks portrait (measuring 24½" x 19½") would be sold at auction at the Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc., 30 East 57th Street, on November 24th. Later news stories reported that an audience of one thousand persons were in the gallery when Hiram H. Parke, who conducted the sale, sold the portrait to Kennedy & Co., art dealers, 785 Fifth Avenue for $11,100. Up to that date this was the highest price ever paid for a portrait of Lincoln at a public sale. The record may still stand. Knoedler & Co., were the underbidders, dropping out at $11,000. At the time of the sale the painting was said to be in excellent condition and was declared to be as great a painting as some of Gilbert Stuart's portraits of Washington. The portrait came into the possession of the Chicago Historical Society in 1959.

In addition to the original portrait of Lincoln and numerous lithographs, a few miniatures of Lincoln by Hicks have found their way into private collections. Brown University is reported to have exhibited a Hicks Lincoln miniature which was discovered in an obscure antique shop in London by Mrs. Steward Campbell, who brought it to this country in an attempt to identify it with the then-lost original portrait. Colonel John Gribbell, then the president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, also exhibited in 1936 a miniature of a Lincoln painting by Thomas Hicks. The existence of the miniature evidently remained unknown until Colonel Gribbell acquired it in England.

The Lincoln National Life Foundation has a lithograph of the Hicks portrait that was once the property of Colonel Henry Watterson, editor of the Louisville (Kentucky) *Courier-Journal*. Watterson gave the lithograph to Addison H. Siegfried, a *Courier-Journal* associate and through his daughter-in-law, who resided in La Jolla, California, it was acquired for the Foundation collection in 1932.

Hicks is remembered, not only in connection with his portrait, but as one successful in obtaining an autobiographical sketch from Abraham Lincoln. Hicks informed Lincoln that the public would want a picture of his birthplace and "if you will tell me where it is, we will not trouble you again about it." Meanwhile, Hicks handed Lincoln a small memorandum book. Lincoln took

(Continued to Page 3)

CHARLES ALFRED BARRY'S LINCOLN PORTRAIT "THE GREEK GOD"

On Saturday, June 30, 1860 Charles Alfred Barry, a Massachusetts artist, arrived in Springfield, Illinois, to do a crayon drawing of the Republican candidate. Barry carried letters of introduction from Governor Nathaniel P. Banks, John A. Andrew and other prominent Republicans of Massachusetts. Lincoln agreed to give Barry a sitting on the following Monday morning.

Barry spent ten days in Springfield, studying the temperament, moods, and features of this remarkable man under many different conditions and at all angles. In 1892 the artist prepared a graphic account of his visit with Lincoln which was published in *The Boston Transcript*. This account of Barry's visit and the circumstances and conditions under which he obtained the sittings and made the portrait also appeared in *The Granite Monthly* October-December, 1904. Barry wrote that "I worked faithfully upon the portrait, studying every feature most carefully for ten days, and was more than fully rewarded for my labor when Mr. Lincoln, pointing to the picture, said, 'Even my enemies must declare that to be true likeness of Old Abe.'"

The original portrait was exhibited in Chicago at the Tremont House, in New York at the room of George Ward Nichols, and Boston at the rooms of the old Mercantile Library Association on Summer Street. There is an interesting story connected with the portrait when it was on exhibit in New York. Barry wrote that "when it was on exhibition in Mr. Nicholas' room in New York and standing on an easel in the middle of the room facing Broadway, a short, thick-set gentleman walked in. He did not speak to me; I did not speak to him. He stood a short distance from the picture for a little while, then—I had turned my head to look at him—stepped forward and, folding his arms across his breast, said slowly with clear utterance: 'an honest man, God knows.' The next instant he passed out of the room. It was Stephen A. Douglas."

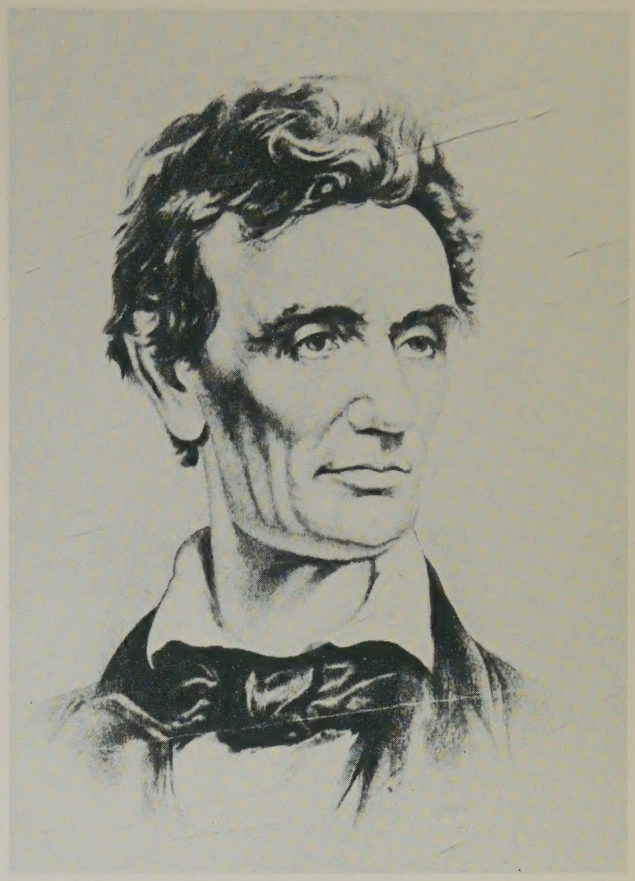
The Boston Transcript on (July) 14, 1860 commented as follows on the Barry portrait:

"Passing under an American flag, that serves as the sign of a limited copartnership between Messieurs 'Bell & Everett,' we entered Mercantile Hall, and found ourselves in the presence of 'Honest Old Abe,' whom we had been led to expect from the frightful prints that have been in circulation. There is none of the smooth, bland, political office-seeker look about the face of the fearless Illinois backwoodsman, raftsman, lawyer, or whatsoever else he has been, or may be. His is not the head to bow to an 'imperious master.'

"There is apparently enough of the General Jackson firmness to please the most ardent admirer of 'Old Hickory,' and withal a pleasant, genial expression of the 'How d'ye do? Make yourself at home" order, that evinces a readiness of adaption to any circumstance, even though that circumstance be the Presidential Chair. Mr. Barry, in this portrait, has given another evidence of his talent and skill, and the picture will doubtless give great satisfaction to those interested. It is to be engraved at once in the best possible manner, and will have a large sale."

No one knows where the crayon drawing is today. According to William O. Clough who wrote the article "Crayon Portrait of Abraham Lincoln," *The Granite Monthly*, October-December, 1904: "The last that was known of the original portrait . . . it was owned by Mrs. E. A. Hilton, Commonwealth Avenue, Boston." Occasionally, however, publishers of Lincoln prints have claimed to have discovered Barry's original drawing.

Years later Barry gave a fine word description of Lincoln's physical appearance as he remembered him during that fateful summer of 1860: "How vividly it all comes back to me as I write. The lonely room, the great bony figure with its long arms, and legs that seemed to be continually twisting themselves together; the long wiry neck, the narrow chest, the uncombed hair, the cavernous sockets beneath the high forehead, the bushy eyebrows hanging like curtains over the bright, dreamy eyes, the awkward speech, the pronounced truthfulness and patience; and lastly, the sure feeling in his heart that coming events whatever they might be, would come to him and to the American people straight from the hand of God."



A lithographic copy of the crayon portrait made by Charles A. Barry in Springfield in June, 1860.

The crayon portrait was published in 1860 by the eminent lithographer, J. H. Bufford of Boston in a larger-than-life-size print. The lithographic stone was engraved by J. E. Baker. Horace Reynolds, commented on the lithograph in *The Christian Science Monitor*, February 12, 1947: "The lithographer stylized and sentimentalized the drawing, seeking to make an attractive picture. He did that, too. He softened the lines of the face, accentuated the curves of nose, lips and chin, deepened the shadows under the eyes to make them tragic. In general, he made the face more appealing, sweeter, more Byronic above the open collar and large black bow tie. He made a charming picture. But surely the sterner drawing is a better likeness of Old Abe."

Only a few large folio impressions of Barry's crayon portrait were struck off, due to the breaking of the lithographic stone. Apparently less than a dozen of the original large folio prints are extant today. In 1943 one was listed on the market for $350. Many smaller prints of the original large folio impression have been published and widely distributed. Because of the print's "Byronic" character many collectors have designed this study "The Greek God."

"THE YOUTHFUL LINCOLN"

(Continued from Page 2)

the book and wrote the following: "I was born February 12, 1809 in then Hardin County, Kentucky at a point within the new recently formed county of Larue, a mile, or a mile & a half from where Hodgensville now is. My parents being dead and my own memory not serving. I know no means of identifying the precise locality. It was on Nolin Creek. A. Lincoln"

"June 14, 1860"

See *Lincoln Lore* No. 313, and No. 375.

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Selections approved by a Bibliography Committee consisting of the following members; Arnold Gates, 289 New Hyde Park Road, Garden City, N. Y.; Carl Haverlin, 2 Masterson Road, Bronxville, N. Y.; E. B. Long, 708 North Kenilworth Ave., Oak Park, Ill.; Richard F. Lufkin, 45 Milk Street, Boston, 9, Mass.; Wayne C. Temple, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tenn.; Ralph G. Newman, 18 East Chestnut Street, Chicago 11, Ill., William H. Townsend, 310 First National Bank Bldg., Lexington 3, Ky.; and Clyde C. Walton, Illinois State Historical Library, Springfield, Ill.

New items available for consideration may be sent to the above address or to the Lincoln National Life Foundation.

—ARABIC—

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